
THE CrossFit LIFE

Suffering in Silence

Molly Godby may work out alone, but in the middle of the WOD she feels the presence of other garage CrossFitters who urge her to keep going.

By Molly Godby

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Tick-tock. It's just the clock and me. No one else dropping weights. No coach yelling at me to pick up that bar, to explode from the hips. No one cheering me along when they see all I want to do is give in to the pain. Only me, my music, my sweat, my thoughts and that ticking clock, mocking me as I struggle for air and will myself to somehow get back on that pull-up bar.

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I am not one of the many athletes who have an affiliate to call home. I work out five to six days a week, and I work out alone. All alone in the back of a warehouse at my husband's office. We have what we need: the standard equipment and then some. But what I don't have is someone to work out with on a regular basis, and usually I have no one at all. No one to coach me, to push me to finish, to battle alongside me. All I have is myself.

Even though I truly suffer alone, I know that I really am not all alone out here. In fact, I share my gym with other loners. We pass like ships in the night. What we see of each other is what we leave behind—drywall scratch about WODs and times, sweat on the floor, chalk on the bars, the evidence of our pain and our accomplishments. We are joint forces separated by time and space. Whether the workout is 4 minutes or 40, we fight to make our lives better. We reach for goals that only we know and that others probably would not understand if we told them.

CrossFit, from the instant I did that first WOD, instilled in me a never-quit mentality. No matter what the devil inside my brain is telling me, I will get it done. I will finish. But then there is that voice that creeps in and tells me, "No, you can't do this. Drop the bar. Take a breather." The voice laughs at me and tries to beat me at my own mental game. The cynical voice doesn't care about accountability or progress or goals. It doesn't care that writing it on the board means I must complete the workout. It is the voice of unearned reps and shaved time. It whispers, "No one will know, so who cares?"

Except I know. And I care.

I know and I care, and my voice is louder and stronger—and therein lies the difference. My voice is based on honesty, respect and being true to myself. I know how many reps I got, if I fully locked out my arms, and what my time was. That's right. No one else would know if I failed a rep but counted it anyway. No one else could be certain about my new PR. No one but me.

My internal voice, my way of being—plus the united voices of the CrossFit community—keep me accountable. Someone in the CrossFit world will ask me about the WOD, what weight I did or what my time was. With that I am no longer one, but one more in the vast community of warriors who make up CrossFit. The voice of that

community, combined with my own, is much louder than the "no" voice, and it screams at me to keep moving, to pick up that bar. It tells me I can breathe when I'm done. It helps me finish and finish strong. It holds me accountable.

CrossFit is a community like no other. You can work out next to someone and be really angry he or she is reps ahead of you. Then that same athlete finishes the WOD and immediately stands next to you, cheering you on, screaming, doing whatever it takes to get you to complete that last rep, even if he or she would really rather lie on the floor and gasp. Someone will be there for you when you cannot figure out how to kip, coaching you and laughing with you because it looks like you are attempting to imitate sizzling bacon instead of a kipping pull-up.



With no one to push, motivate and encourage her, Godby has to rely on her inner voice to push her forward.



On the weekends, Godby and her family work out together, cheering each other on.

That same community is also there for you when you are sick or have a baby or just need to talk about why you have a mental block when it comes to deadlifts. This mentality, this way of being, doesn't just exist in your own box or affiliate. You can walk into a box in a strange place and get the same response and be treated like a long lost friend. I once had that camaraderie. I was at an affiliate, but I had to leave due to many circumstances. I miss the friendship, the coaching, the battles and the support. I miss chasing those who were ahead of me and rooting for those who finished after me. But right now this is not an option for me. What I have now is me.

Thankfully, the CrossFit community and mentality quickly blended into my entire life. The CrossFit people I have known are now my friends and my family, and each one of those people finds his or her way to show up in my life. Sometimes it is one of the other loners asking about the WOD he or she saw scratched on the board. Another time it is a friend who lives across the country calling to say, "I knew that I could call and brag to you about my PR. I knew you'd totally get it!" Sometimes it is a post on Facebook, a text from another athlete or a post or video on CrossFit.com.

My family helps me go on. My father-in-law sometimes pokes his head in the gym and then sits down to watch me work out. My husband may ask what WOD I did, knowing that he will be tackling the same one later that day. On weekend workouts with my family, we scale everything. No matter what age or skill level we are, we can do it together. We high-five each other as we run past, knowing the workout is creating a bond. It is teaching larger, deeper lessons to our children, and at the same time we are having fun and helping create stronger bodies and minds.

Lastly, it is most certainly my kids who help me love what I do. I see them run into our gym and watch their strong, muscular little bodies swinging on the rope. They fight over the rings and ask how much weight is on the bar, curious if they can lift it. They want to make up and complete WODs, and as I run past my 6-year-old daughter opens the door, stepping outside to yell, "Gooo, Momma!"

All these people help me in spirit, but when it comes time to do the work, I am alone. I am the one who makes me get into that gym. I program the workouts with the movements I hate because I know they will make me stronger, better. Truthfully, sometimes suffering in silence is just what I need. I need that time to be alone, to forget about my role as a mom and a wife and just be me, lifting, cursing, sweating, struggling.

At last, alone, I am a woman, an athlete conquering my fears, telling that ticking clock to go to hell.

